

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

July 15, 2009

Mr. Jerry Hansen
Acting Assistant Secretary of the Army (I&E)
Department of the Army
110 Army Pentagon, Room 3E464
Washington, D.C. 20310

Dear Mr. Hansen:

Thank you for your continued service to our nation and the men and women in the United States Army.

We are writing to express our concerns with the current design of the 2005 Base Closure and Realignment (BRAC) Commission Recommendation 133, the relocation of the Washington Headquarter Service (WHS) personnel. Specifically, we question the suitability of the planned location for the Remote Inspection Facility (RIF) at the corner of the property adjacent to Seminary Road and Interstate-395. This RIF is designed to be a point of inspection to prevent damage caused by potential explosive or other hazardous material. While security for those who work and live around the Mark Center location is critical, we believe the functions performed at the RIF would be better suited for an off-site location for the following reasons:

- **Adjacent Facilities.** The current RIF location is in close proximity to many homes and businesses. An explosion or other incident at the RIF could cause extensive damage and injury within a one-mile or greater diameter, thereby potentially affecting thousands of individuals, families, and commercial enterprises in the local vicinity.
- **Adjacent Traffic Interchanges.** Because of the RIF's planned adjacent location to I-395 and Seminary Road, an explosion or hazardous material incident would also adversely affect one of the major traffic arteries for northern Virginia and a national strategic mass evacuation route within the National Capital Region. This interchange is already undergoing a major expansion for HOT lanes and additional Bus Rapid Transit lanes, so its importance as a critical mass transit node in the region is growing. Any damage or other adverse impact to this interchange would seriously degrade vehicular and mass transit transportation to and from the nation's capital and other locations.
- **Preventing Additional Traffic Patterns.** The City of Alexandria and the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) have identified the current RIF location as a potentially viable option for a direct access point from I-395 to serve the Mark Center. This direct access will help alleviate traffic from I-395 and minimize the gridlock during rush-hour commutes.

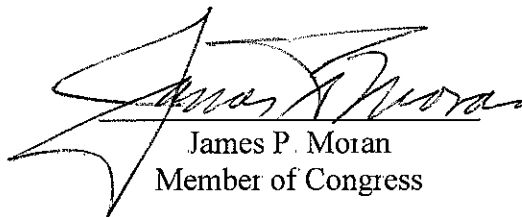
The RIF's current location puts the region's citizens at possible risk and has the potential to degrade a regional transportation system that is already operating at maximum capacity. These issues affect not only the local community, but also other federal agencies in the area. For these reasons, we maintain that the RIF should be placed in an alternate location and not in the heart of critical public and commercial infrastructure.

We understand that an alternative to the current design would be to locate the RIF at an off-site location, which has precedent at other regional Department of Defense facilities. For instance, both the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency and the Office of Naval Research, located in nearby dense urban areas, use off-site RIF facilities to meet their security needs. Moving the RIF off-site would resolve the concerns we have identified and also offer the advantage of enabling pre-screened vehicles to enter the remote receiving facility more efficiently. Land would then be available to build a direct access road for WHS personnel that would help to mitigate current rush-hour delays.

As the design continues for the Mark Center location, we strongly urge you and the Army to reconsider the plans for on-site RIF. Though an off-site location may not provide for the most expeditious vehicle deliveries to the Mark Center site, it is a preferable alternative given the potential consequences should a hazardous incident occur at an on-site location.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

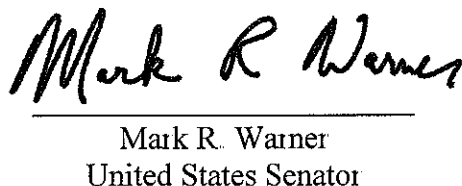
Sincerely,



James P. Moran
Member of Congress



Jim Webb
United States Senator



Mark R. Warner
United States Senator

Cc: The Honorable Ashton B. Carter, Under Secretary of Defense (AT&L)
The Honorable Wayne Army, Dep. Secretary of Defense (I&E)